

April 3, 1973

(Start of Belt #2)

Mr. President, members of the body, I am glad to see the motion there for the purpose of discussion. Also glad that Senator Carpenter has said that when the discussion is through we should allow him to withdraw his motion. When he does that, I think I should like to put a motion up there myself and I will say it now in order that Senator Schmit might be forewarned since he is going to, also, speak. I hope that he will have something to say to the motion which I would propose. That motion being that we do allow 235 to remain bracketed, preferably, on Select File. That purpose being to allow all of us an adequate and a prolonged discussion of welfare in general, not just Senator Schmit's proposal but welfare in general. At a news conference a couple of weeks ago, I proposed, somewhat as just a personal statement, a thought that I have had for some time and I have a great desire to see the thought be presented and discussed here this morning. That be that this body recess for a day or two days, whatever the members would think necessary. I know that in the three sessions that I have served, we do a lot of talking about welfare and we have some people bring in proposals, some with a lot of thought and some, I suspect, not a great deal of thought. In reference to the remarks made by both Senator Carpenter and Senator Marvel, what I learned in Washington last week was that the Federal people, either the Executive or the Legislative, really aren't sure at all at this stage what their thoughts on welfare are either. They really aren't. The only certainty that I got from the Executive Branch was that the President has definitely given up all hopes or thoughts this year of welfare reform instituted by the Executive Branch. And what is Congress going to do? In talking to the five Nebraska representatives, it is my opinion that Congress isn't certain what they are going to do, if anything. I have been alarmed as we talked about Federal Revenue sharing, I have been alarmed at the number of cutbacks, also, and I, personally, am going to stand by my guns and something, a posture that I took several months ago. I do not care to see Federal Revenue sharing money that is coming to this state be targeted right now. Let's take a long look and see just what the Federal action is going to be in the so-called cutbacks of programs. Let us see what the priorities, the new priorities are going to be from the nation's capitol. And as I say, the President definitely has said he will not be able to put forth any welfare reform this year. The figure that Senator Marvel mentioned of three million dollars of General Fund money from this body, according to my equation, that represents about $\frac{1}{2}$ of 1% of an income tax increase, and, further, I should say that my liking for having this bill held would be that the bill that I have which should be ready to come out of Committee any day, LB 404, which you know was the program that I am trying to adopt for Nebraska based on the Reagan reform in California. The experience there has been that while great numbers have been taken off the welfare roles of the state of California, they have taken care of those who truly deserve welfare by increasing their payments 27% inside of two years and I think this program has more than just a touch of merit. And I have to say this, anything that we would do prior to everyone of this body taking a long look at LB 404 would be presumptuous and somewhat pretentious. It has bothered me that we have passed some welfare measures in my tenure here. Measures that looked good on paper but is it not wrong for a body to tell a group of people, we are giving you X number of dollars and turn right around and prorate. Let us take a look. I would ask the members of the body to earnestly give thought this morning, rather than making a move just because the bill is on Final Reading on this given date, draw back in. How many of us really know the ins and outs of welfare today? You can take sets of figures in welfare and read them to satisfy your, in many